



# NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND  
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



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## **Stuftt family honored for 100 years support to National Weather Service**

A well-known family from rural Nebraska is recognized by the National Weather Service for a century of dedication to the volunteer weather observation program.

Officials of NOAA's North Platte forecast office will honor five generations of the Stuftt family in a ceremony on Aug. 13 marking the family's 100 years of participation in the program.

Since June 1, 1911, five generations of the George Stuftt family have provided an unbroken weather record for the observation site nine miles east-northeast of Elsmere and about 38 miles southwest of Ainsworth. The family has provided more than 36,500 daily reports to the National Weather Service.

Brian Hirsch, meteorologist-in-charge of the North Platte office, will present the Family Heritage Award to the Stuftt family at a ceremony to begin at 2 p.m. CDT, Aug. 13 at the Assembly of God church in Ainsworth.

"The weather data collected by volunteer observers throughout the country have provided meteorologists and climate researchers with records that are vital to daily, weekly and long-term forecasting," Hirsch said. "Before we can understand how the world's climate functions, we have to know how the climate functions in our own country. The availability of information collected for more than 100 years speaks to the American determination and spirit in place since the country was founded by a group of forefathers that included weather observers."

George "Curt" Stuftt established the Elsmere site (then called Koshopah 7NE) at the Stuftt ranch and provided daily precipitation, temperature and snowfall data to the then-U.S. Weather Bureau for eight years. His son Foster took over observing duties for a short time beginning in 1919. Just a few days after their wedding, Foster's new wife Ruby took over the helm on April 26, 1920. One of the most-honored cooperative observers in the program, Ruby served as the primary observer until she died in 1995, only a few days before she would have completed 75 years of service.

Ruby's son Lester started as his mother's back-up on Nov. 20, 1958 and remains as the primary observer today. Lester's son Curt is the current back-up and is waiting in the wings to take over responsibility for the site. Lester Stuftt said the family hopes to continue its weather observing tradition for another 100 years.

As primary observers, Ruby and Lester Stuftt helped set the standard for program participants and earned much recognition from NOAA. The mother and son are the only members of the same family to receive NOAA's two most prestigious awards presented to cooperative observers.

Ruby received the John Campanius Holm Award in 1966 and received the Thomas Jefferson Award in 1976. Lester received the Holm Award in 1999 and the Jefferson Award in 2008. In addition, in October 1992, NOAA officials named the 70-year length of service award the Ruby Stufft Award.

“Volunteers like the Stufft family, are crucial to National Weather Service operations,” Hirsch said. “Of more than 11,000 volunteer observer sites throughout the country contributing to the daily collection of weather data, only a dedicated few have been in operation for 100 years or more.

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